

Having a Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) is something that no one else could even imagine. It is as close to death as a person may come without actually dying. You have to keep pressing forward and be stronger in your spirit to survive and become a survivor. My peers and I live not only 8 hours a day with a TBI, but for every hour of everyday for the rest of our lives we will live with a TBI. I am going to share my story and the story of one of my peers with you and I hope it has as much of an impact on your life as it has mine.

On August 9th 1992 I was in a very serious accident leaving me in a coma for 17.5 days. I Frank A. Throneberry had no idea that what I did would have such a negative effect on me and a life changing experience. I was a pedestrian in the wrong place at the wrong time doing the wrong things. I took life for granted not knowing how close I would come to my life ending unexpectedly. Like a baby I had people from the hospital feeding me like my mother did so many years ago. I was left in a wheelchair because I couldn't walk and had strangers pushing me to the different therapies I needed. To name a few of those therapies including physical, occupational, psychology, speech, language and pathology just to name a few. After those days were over I spent the next 18 years in and out of different rehabilitation programs. I am now more active than ever before now that I am involved with Communicare, which gave me a better quality of life. On December 8th of 2010 I became a client of Communicare of MI. Since then I began feeling more like a person rather than a number. I am now a certified personal trainer that can help others the way I have been helped. Because of my TBI, according to the courts I can't be a loving father to my two sons. I am head injured, but that doesn't mean my heart cannot still feel love. My biological family drifted away, but Communicare has become like a new family of mine. I would now like to share the story of my sister, Beth.

Beth is one of my peers; and her life also changed dramatically. Her accident happened on April 27th, 2007. Beth was in a coma for 7 days and transferred to three different hospitals. She was active in many different therapies including; vocational, speech, and physical therapy. Beth had to work very hard every day just to learn how to walk again. What helped her through these tough days were her strong family as her support system. Beth suffered a shattered right heel and nerves. Beth currently feels she is fortunate to have made it this far and will always continue to progress. She works day in and day out to improve her short term memory sometimes with the help of memory aids. Her goals for the future are to receive her GED, continue to better herself in landscaping and bring back her old hobby with the sewing machine.

Not a single person should be left behind, who has suffered a catastrophic event. The insurance companies want to leave survivors behind. I purchase insurance to protect myself and others in the event of an accident. Without no fault insurance these and many other different therapies I receive now I would have never come as far in life as I have. Not **anyone** should be left behind, because that anyone could be you! Knowledge is power and being around people who have suffered and learning to live with a TBI means we are powerful people with a vote and a voice, too. It is not what you look like or who you are, but it is who you can become after a TBI. I thank God for that right.

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